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Rosenzweig

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(54) **STEAM NOZZLE ATTACHMENT FOR USE WITH STEAM CLEANER**

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(51) **Int. Cl.**
A47L 9/06 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **15/322**; 15/339; 15/393; 15/398; 15/403; 15/412; 15/320

(58) **Field of Classification Search** 15/322, 15/393, 403, 398, 320, 339, 412; 68/222; 134/105
See application file for complete search history.

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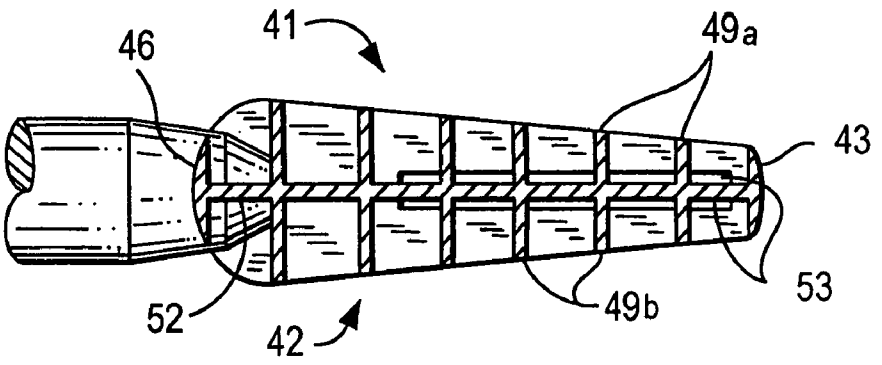
(57) **ABSTRACT**

A steam nozzle attachment for a steam cleaner having a substantially rectangular frame with a steam outlet positioned between the front and rear walls of the frame is provided. A plurality of baffles to distribute steam are disposed substantially perpendicular to the steam nozzle between the side walls of the frame. A replaceable fabric pocket that fits snugly over the frame is provided to distribute cleaning steam to the surface to be cleaned.

21 Claims, 7 Drawing Sheets



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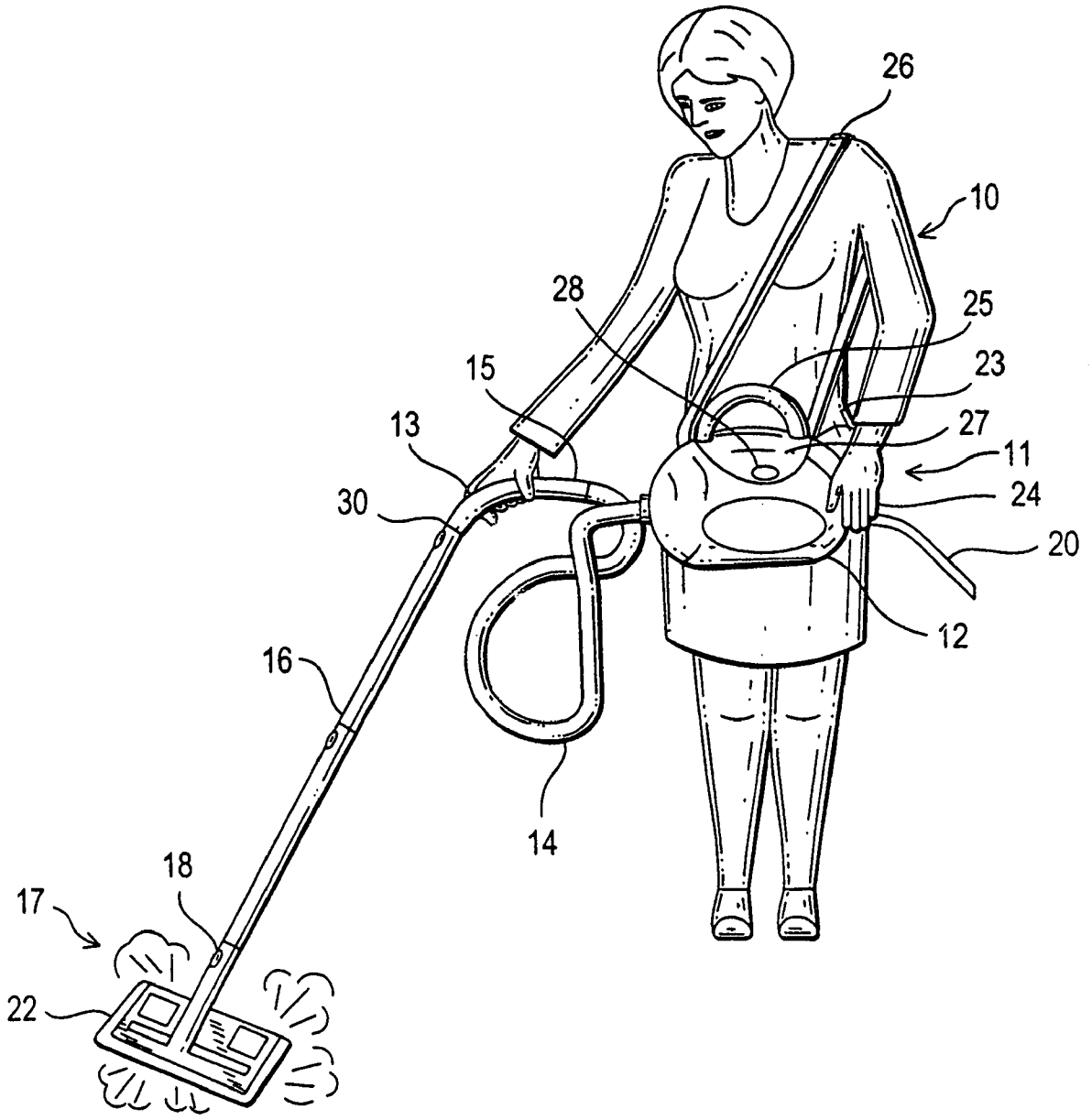
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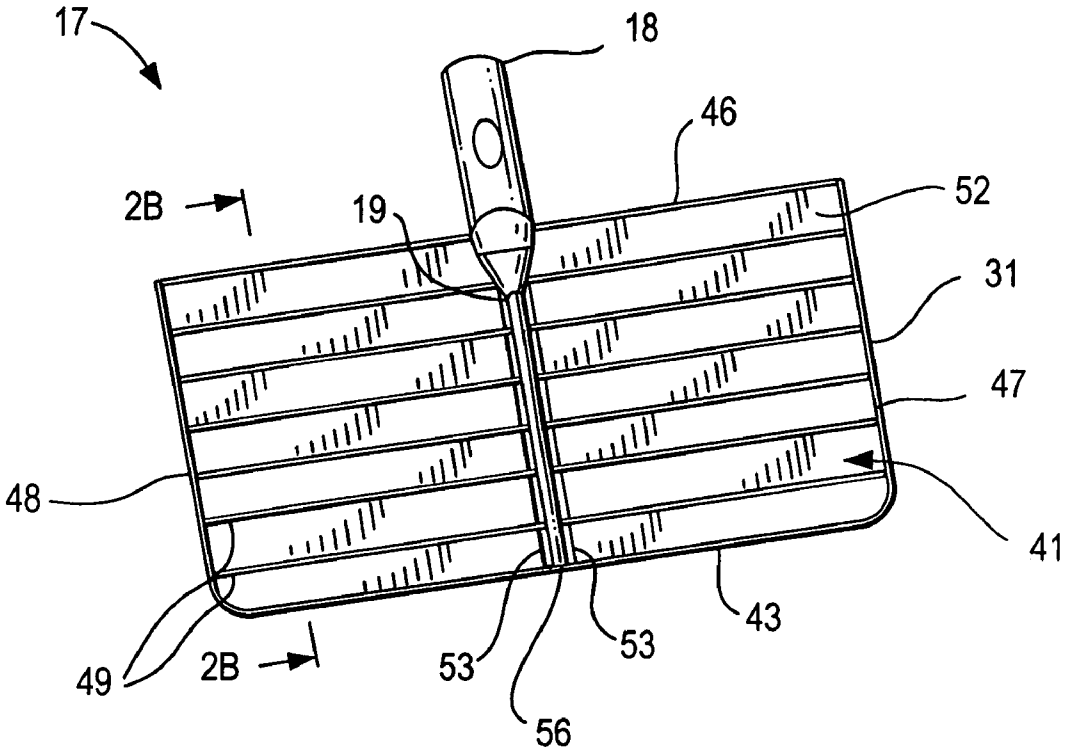
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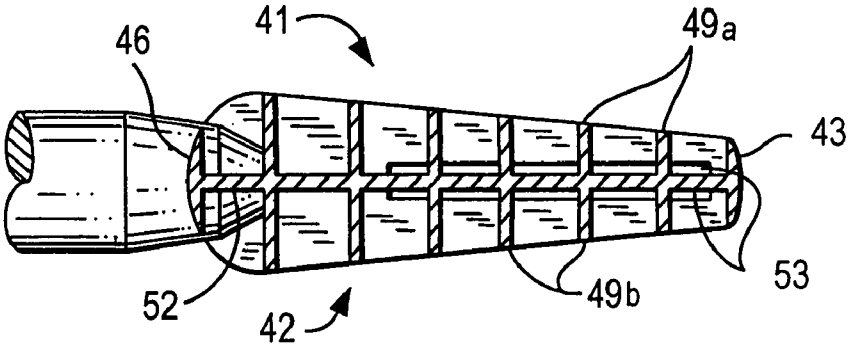
FIG. 2A


41
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49a
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FIG. 2B

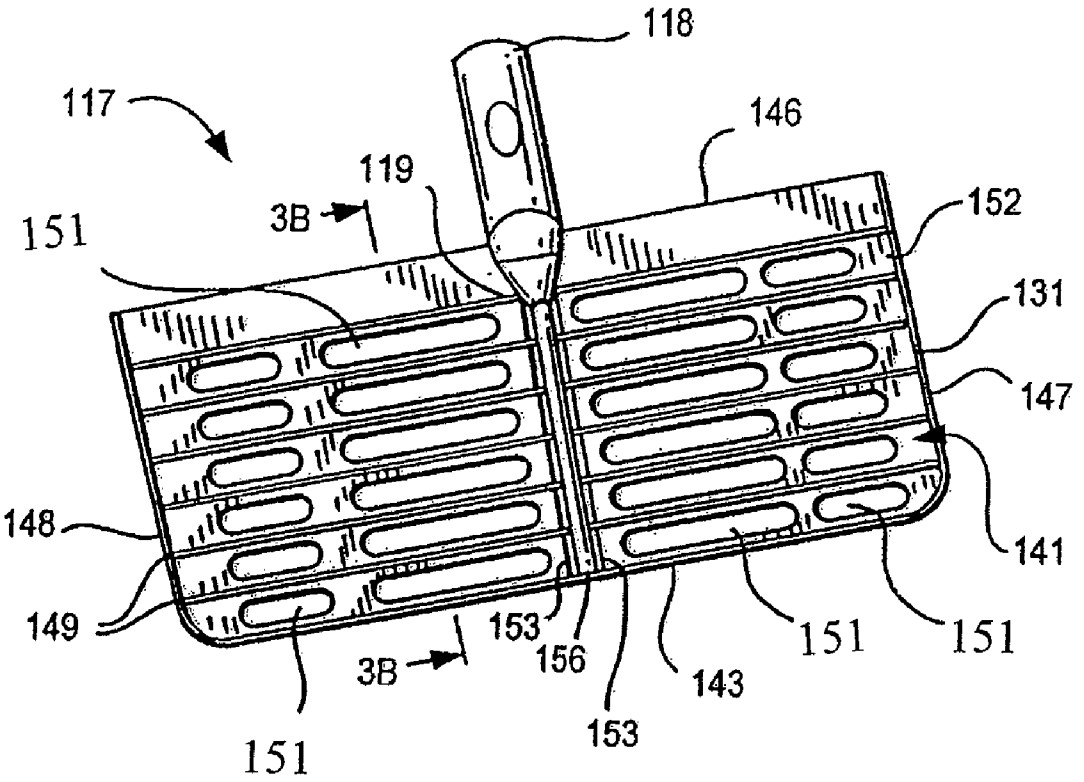
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FIG. 3A

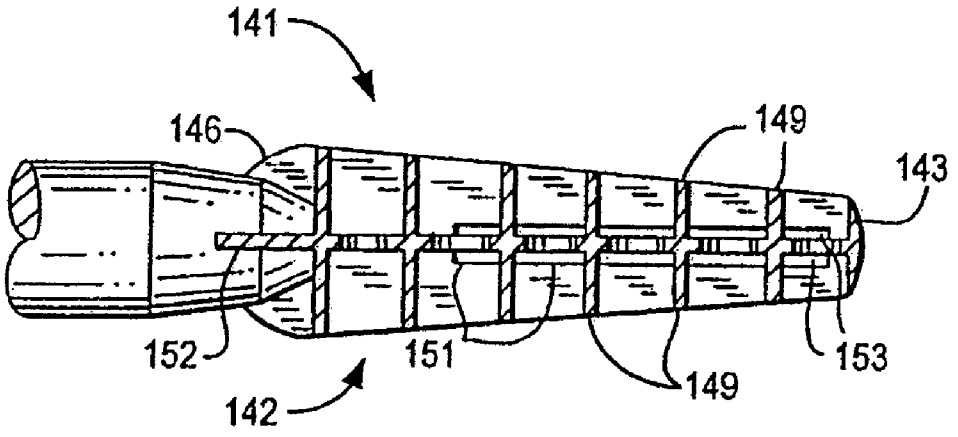
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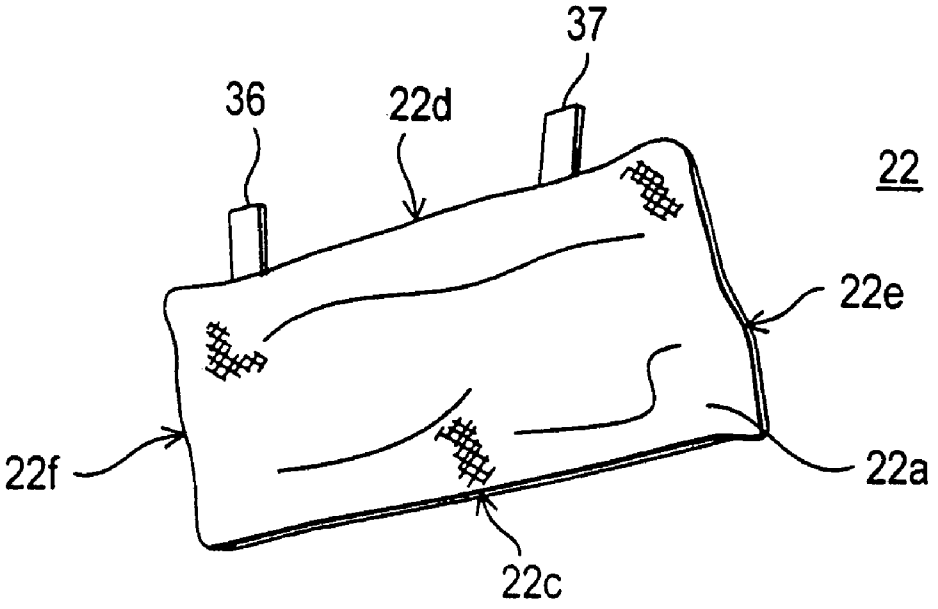
FIG. 3B

FIG. 4



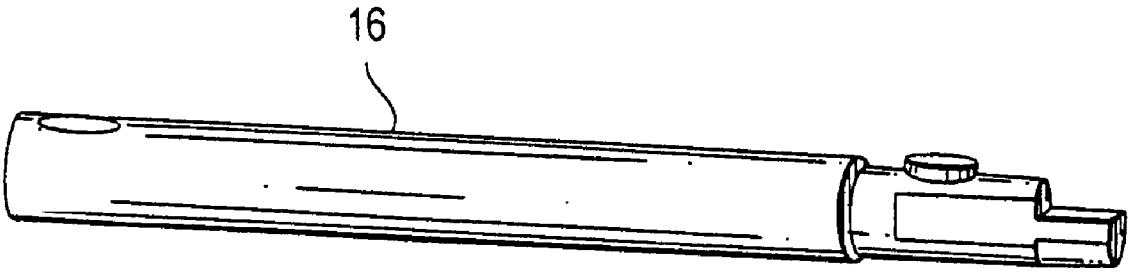


FIG. 5

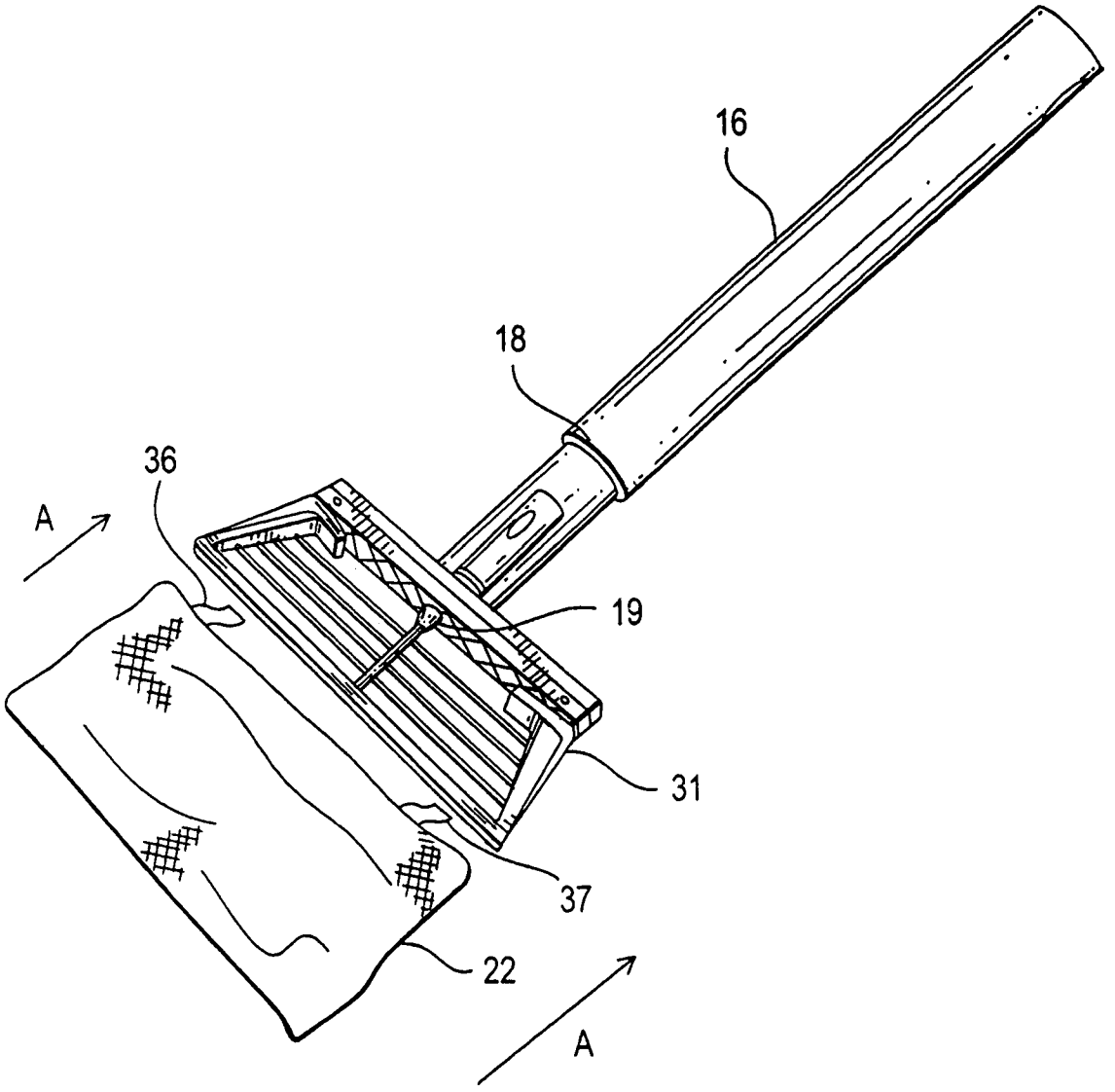


FIG. 6

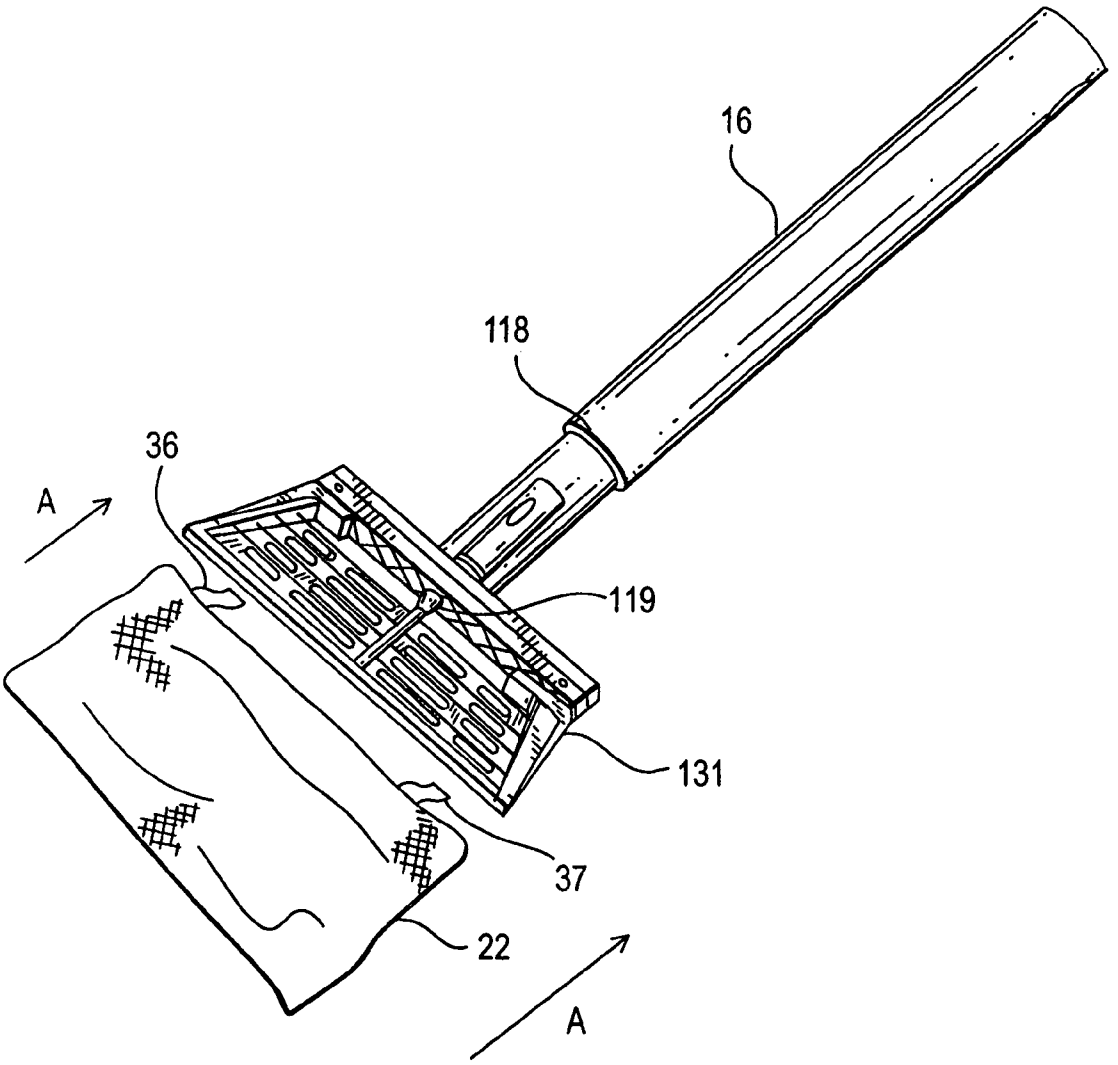


FIG.7

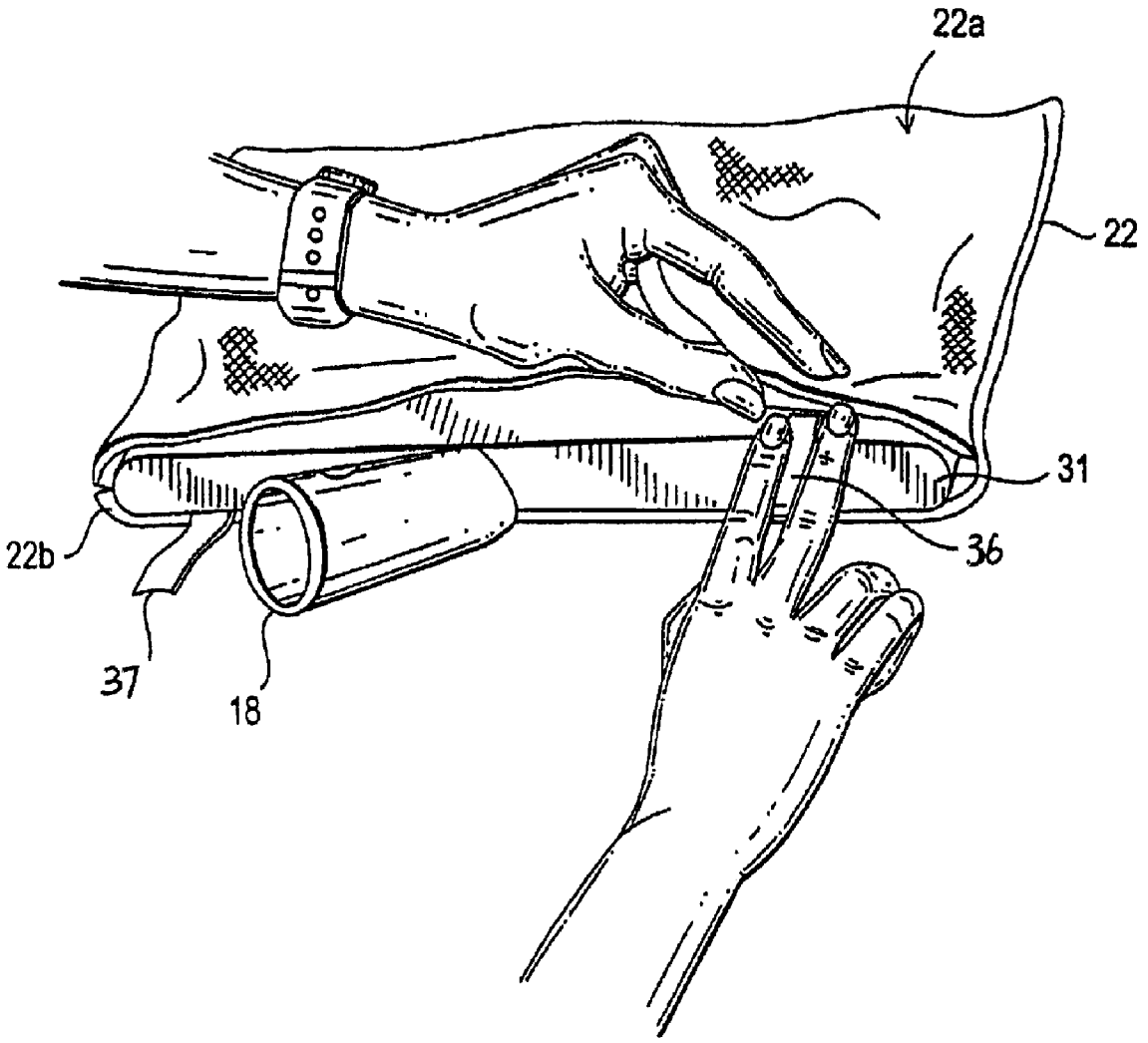


FIG. 8

STEAM NOZZLE ATTACHMENT FOR USE WITH STEAM CLEANER

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This is a continuation-in-part of U.S. application Ser. No. 10/884,192, filed Jul. 2, 2004 now U.S. Pat. No. 7,600,401.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The invention relates generally to a nozzle for use with a fabric steam pocket, and more particularly to a steam nozzle attachment with a fabric steam pocket cover for use with a steam cleaner.

Steaming devices used to apply steam to household objects are well known. The uses of the devices vary widely, and may include the application of steam to drapes or other fabrics to ease wrinkles, and the application of steam to objects to assist in cleaning the objects.

Typical steam devices have a reservoir for storing water with a heating element to heat the water. The heated water generates steam, which may be directed towards its intended destination through a nozzle which controls the application of the steam. Variation of the shape and size of the nozzle allows for preferred distribution of generated steam to an object to be cleaned. The nozzles may be disconnectable from the steam generator to allow different nozzles to be utilized, based on the object to be steamed. The nozzle may be either closely coupled to the steam generator, or located at a distance from the steam generator, requiring tubing or other steam transfer structures to be interconnected between the steam generator and the discharge nozzle. Typically, it is beneficial to provide suitable connectors between the steam generator and the nozzle to allow either the nozzle to be connected to the steam generator, or to allow the interpositioning of transfer tubes or hoses between the steam generator and the nozzle.

In general, the nozzles used with the steam cleaners do not have large surface areas and a cloth to absorb the liquid condensate of the steam. In order to increase the cleaning surface area, a flat fabric piece is folded around a flat brush or nozzle. The folded fabric on top of the brush or nozzle is secured by a clip on top of the piece. Often steam injected behind the cloth passes through the cloth at the points the bristles contact on the cloth. This tends to wet the cloth and reduce the cleaning effectiveness of the steam. In addition, the cloth covers must be carefully attached not to cover the front or back of the brush attachment.

Notwithstanding the wide variety of steam generating appliances available, there exists the need to provide an easy to install attachment for use with a steam cleaner. That will effectively improve the effective steaming surface area of the steam cleaners. It is desirable to provide this device with the ability for a user to clean a larger surface area easily without worrying about wiping up the liquid condensate of the steam when cleaning flooring, furniture and other household items.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Generally speaking, in accordance with the invention, a steam nozzle attachment to clean large surface areas with a steam cleaner is provided. The steam nozzle attachment includes a frame pivotally connected to a steamer pipe connected to a steam source. The frame is substantially rectangular in shape with baffles disposed substantially perpendicular to the steam nozzle on both upper and lower surfaces of the frame. The baffles are separated by a plane that is parallel to the nozzle. The steam nozzle also has a passageway perpendicular to the baffles that has openings to direct steam into the baffles and up the upper surface of the frame. In one embodiment, there are channels between the baffles so that the baffle on the upper surface and the lower surface of the frame are connected. A fabric steam pocket is two layers of fabric joined at three edges with fasteners at the open edge for fastening the pocket over the rear wall of the frame and is easily installed over the frame.

A steam nozzle is mounted to the lower surface of the attachment and is operatively connected to the steam cleaner outlet pipe. When steam is injected into the pocket, the entire surface area of the fabric may be used to steam clean a surface.

Accordingly, it is an object of the invention to provide a steam nozzle attachment to provide increased steam cleaning surface area.

Another object of the invention is to provide a fabric steam pocket that is easily mounted on an attachment for a steam cleaner.

A further object of the invention is to provide a steam nozzle attachment with a fabric cover that does not allow steam to escape at points of contact with brush bristles.

Yet another object of the invention is a fabric steam pocket that can be used for dual side cleaning.

Still other objects and advantages of the invention will in part be obvious and will in part be apparent from the specification.

The invention accordingly comprises a product possessing the features, properties, and the relation of components which will be exemplified in the product hereinafter described, and the scope of the invention will be indicated in the claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

For a fuller understanding of the invention, reference is made to the following description taken in connection with the accompanying drawing(s), in which:

FIG. **1** is a perspective view of a user cleaning a floor with a portable steam cleaning device including a steam nozzle attachment with a fabric cover constructed and arranged in accordance with the invention;

FIG. **2**A is a top plan view of the steam nozzle attachment for use with a steam cleaner of the type shown in FIG. **1**;

FIG. **2**B is a cross-sectional view of the steam nozzle attachment of FIG. **2**A taken along line **2**B-**2**B;

FIG. **3**A is a top plan view of a steam nozzle attachment for use with a steam cleaner in accordance with another embodiment of the invention;

FIG. **3**B is a cross-sectional view of steam nozzle attachment of FIG. **3**A taken along line **3**B-**3**B;

FIG. **4** is a perspective view of a steam pocket fabric cover for use with the steam nozzle attachment of FIGS. **2**A, **2**B, **3**A and **3**B;

FIG. **5** is a perspective view of a rigid pipe suitable for use with the steam cleaner of FIG. **1**;

FIG. **6** is an exploded perspective view showing how a fabric steam pocket is mounted onto the attachment of FIG. **2**;

FIG. **7** is an exploded perspective view showing how a fabric steam pocket is mounted onto the attachment of FIG. **3**; and

FIG. **8** is a perspective view of a steam pocket being attached to the steam nozzle attachment constructed and arranged in accordance with the invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

FIG. **1** is a perspective view of a user **10** using a steam cleaning device **11** including a main body **12** and a steam release hand grip **13** coupled to main body **12** by a flexible hose **14** and a steam outlet **15**. A rigid pipe **16** is mounted on the distal nozzle end of hand grip **13**. A steam nozzle attachment **17** constructed and arranged in accordance with the invention is mounted on the distal end of the rigid pipe **16**. Steam nozzle attachment **17** is rectangular in shape and includes a pivotable hole steam inlet coupling or steam inlet **18** at the back edge or proximal end. A steam outlet **19** shown in FIG. **2**A dispenses steam into a steam pocket fabric **22** which covers a steam pocket frame **31** on the front or distal side of steam nozzle attachment **17**.

Steam inlet **18** has the same configuration as outlet **15** to rigid pipe **16**. This allows for installation of the different attachments to steam release hand grip **13** of steam cleaner **11**, such as brushes and nozzles.

Main body **12** of steam cleaning device **11** includes a water inlet **23** and an internal water reservoir **24** with heating elements connected to a power source by a power cord **20**. Steam generated in reservoir **24** exits by steam outlet **15** through flexible hose **14** coupled thereto. Main body **12** is outfitted with a handle **25** and a strap **26** to allow user **10** to lift and carry main body **12**. Conveniently, main body **12** also includes an on/off switch **27** and an indicator light **28** to indicate when steam temperature is appropriate for use.

Once water has been heated sufficiently to generate steam within main body **12**, user **10** may selectively release steam by operation of hand grip **13**. Hand grip **13** has a distal outlet end **30** for securing rigid pipe, or additional attachments, such as brushes or nozzles.

FIG. **2**A is a top plan view of rectangular frame **31** of steam nozzle attachment **17**. Rectangular frame **31** includes a front wall **43**, a rear wall **46**, a right side wall **47** and a left side wall **48**. Frame **31** also includes an upper surface **41** and a lower surface **42** (shown in FIG. **2**B). A plurality of baffles **49** extends from left side wall **48** to steam outlet **19** and from right side wall **47** to steam outlet **19** within frame **31**. Baffles **49** are planar in shape and extend perpendicular to the sides of frame **31**. Frame **31** has rear wall **46** with steam inlet **18** connected thereto. In this embodiment, baffles **49** on both upper surface **41** and lower surface **42** are separated from each other by a rectangular plane **52** that connects front wall **43**, rear wall **46**, right side wall **47** and left side wall **48** of frame **31** together. Steam outlet **19** has a passageway **56** that extends to front wall **43** perpendicular to baffles **49**. Passageway **56** has a plurality of vents or openings **53** that surrounds passageway **56**. Baffles **49** help direct the steam in the steam nozzle attachment **17** to upper surface **41** of frame **31**. An advantage of steam nozzle attachment **17** is that steam rises out of upper surface of frame **31** to provide a dry surface with the benefits of steam when cleaning.

FIG. **2**B shows a cross-sectional view of steam nozzle attachment **17**. Here, rectangular plane **52** is shown with baffles **49***a* on upper surface **41** and baffles **49***b* on lower surface **42**. Passageway **56** (shown in FIG. **2**A) has vents **53** on both upper surface **41** and lower surface **42** between each baffle to help direct steam into baffles **49***a* and **49***b*.

FIG. **3**A is a top plan view of a steam nozzle attachment **117** for use with a steam cleaner, respectively, constructed and arranged in accordance with another embodiment of the invention. All elements in FIGS. **2**A and **2**B are present and identified by the same reference numerals plus **100**. Here, a rectangular frame **131** includes a front wall **143**, a rear wall **146**, a right side wall **147** and a left side wall **148**. Frame **131** also includes an upper surface **141** and a lower surface **142** (shown in FIG. **3**B). A plurality of baffles **149** extends from left side wall **148** to steam outlet **119** and from right side wall **147** to steam outlet **119** within frame **131**. Baffles **149** are substantially planar, with openings **151** in the plane **152** between baffles **149**. Frame **131** has rear wall **146** with steam inlet **118** connected thereto. Baffles **149** on both upper surface **141** and lower surface **142** are separated from each other by a rectangular plane **152** that connects front wall **143**, rear wall **146**, right side wall **147** and left side wall **148** of frame **131** together. However, in this embodiment, there are channels **151** between baffles **149** so that baffles **149** on the upper surface **141** and baffles **149** on the lower surface **142** of frame **131** are connected.

FIG. **3**B shows a cross-sectional view of steam nozzle attachment **117**. Here, rectangular frame **131** is shown with baffles **149** on both upper surface **141** and lower surface **142**. As stated above, baffles **149** on the upper surface **141** and on the lower surface **142** of frame **131** have channels **151** between them are connected. Passageway **156** (shown in FIG. **3**A) has vents or openings **153** on both upper surface **141** and lower surface **142** between each baffle to help direct steam into baffles **149**.

Referring now to FIG. **4**, the construction of steam pocket **22** for use with nozzles **17** and **117** is shown in detail. In the illustrated embodiment, steam pocket **22** is a cloth or towel. It may be formed of any suitable fabric such as cotton or a synthetic fabric, such as polyester or polyolefin fiber. Preferably, the fabric of pocket **22** is a microfiber. Most preferably, the microfiber is a synthetic polyester microfiber.

Steam pocket **22** is configured to slip over frame **31**. In this respect, it is formed of a first layer **22***a* and an opposed second layer **22***b*, each having a rectangular shape with two opposed long edges **22***c* and **22***d* and two opposed short sides **22***e* and **22***f* as shown in FIG. **2***b*. Short edges **22***e* and **22***f* and one long side **22***c* are stitched to form pocket **22**.

A pair of straps **36** and **37** is mounted on open side of the steam pocket **22**. In the preferred embodiment, fasteners **36** and **37** are fabric hook-and-loop fasteners, such as VELCRO-type fasteners. Alternatively, straps **36** and **37** may include buttons or snaps. In each case, straps **36** and **37** are placed over steam pocket frame **31** or **131** and secured to hold pocket **22** in place when used to clean a floor or other surface as shown in FIGS. **6** and **7**.

The rigid pipe suitable for use with the steam cleaner is shown in FIG. **5**.

FIGS. **6** and **7** show how a fabric steam pocket is mounted onto the attachment of FIGS. **2** and **3**, respectively. FIG. **8** illustrates a fabric steam pocket mounted onto the steam nozzle attachment.

Inlet coupling **18** attached to steam nozzle attachment **17** may be rotated so user **10** may use both sides of steam pocket fabric **22** without having to reinstall steam pocket **22**. This extends the time steam pocket **22** may be used without having to rinse and reinstall it.

A steam nozzle attachment **17** with a steamed pocket fabric cover **22** in accordance with the invention provides a vast improvement over placing a towel onto a bristle attachment for a steam cleaner. It avoids puncture of the cloth by the bristles and provides twice the cleaning surface. Moreover, the fabric cover is easily installed and replaced.

It will thus be seen that the objects set forth above, among those made apparent from the preceding description, are efficiently attained and, since certain changes may be made in the above product without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention, it is intended that all matter contained in the

above description and shown in the accompanying drawings shall be interpreted as illustrative and not in a limiting sense.

It is also to be understood that the following claims are intended to cover all of the generic and specific features of the invention herein described and all statements of the scope of the invention which, as a matter of language, might be said to fall therebetween.

The present invention may be embodied in other specific forms without departing from the spirit or essential attributes of the invention. Accordingly, reference should be made to the appended claims, rather than the foregoing specification, as indicating the scope of the invention. A steam nozzle attachment with a fabric pocket cover in accordance with the invention provides a vast improvement over placing a towel onto a bristle attachment for a steam cleaned. It avoids puncture of the cloth by the bristles and provide twice the cleaning surface. Moreover, the fabric cover is easily installed and replaced.

What is claimed is:

1. A steam nozzle attachment for mounting a fabric steam pocket for use with a steam cleaner, comprising:

a frame with a top side and a bottom side, comprising:

a front wall extending from the top side to the bottom side;

a rear wall extending from the top side to the bottom side, the rear wall with a steam inlet mounted to the outside of the rear wall and a steam nozzle mounted on the inside of the rear wall, the nozzle having a passageway that extends from the nozzle to a position substantially adjacent to the inside of the front wall;

a right side wall extending from the top side to the bottom side;

a left side wall extending from the top side to the bottom side;

a central plane having an upper surface and an opposed lower surface, the central plane extending between: (i) the front wall and the rear wall, and (ii) the right side wall and the left side wall;

a first plurality of baffles extending: (i) substantially vertically upwards from the upper surface of the central plane to the top side of the frame, (ii) from the left side wall to the nozzle, and (iii) from the right side wall to the nozzle;

a second plurality of baffles extending: (i) substantially vertically downwards from the lower surface of the central plane to the bottom side of the frame, (ii) from the left side wall to the nozzle, and (iii) from the right side wall to the nozzle;

a steam pipe for providing steam to the steam inlet; and

the nozzle connected to a steam outlet for injecting steam into the region between the first and second plurality of baffles and onto a fabric steam pocket mounted on the frame.

2. The steam nozzle attachment of claim **1**, wherein the frame is rotatable about the steam inlet so that the top side and the bottom side of the frame can be used for steam cleaning.

3. The steam nozzle attachment of claim **1**, wherein the central plane of the frame has channels or openings connecting the first plurality of baffles on an the upper surface of the plane with the second plurality of baffles on the opposed lower surface of the plane.

4. The steam nozzle attachment of claim **1**, wherein the passageway that extends to the inside of the front wall is substantially perpendicular to the first and second plurality of baffles.

5. The steam nozzle attachment of claim **1**, wherein the passageway has vents to direct steam into the region between the first and second plurality of baffles.

6. A steam nozzle attachment and a fabric steam pocket assembly that releasably mounts a frame, the frame comprising:

a top side and a bottom side;

a front wall extending from the top side to the bottom side;

a rear wall extending from the top side to the bottom side, the rear wall with a steam inlet mounted to the outside of the rear wall and a steam nozzle mounted on the inside of the rear wall, the nozzle having a passageway that extends from the nozzle to a position substantially adjacent to the inside of the front wall;

a right side wall extending from the top side to the bottom side;

a left side wall extending from the top side to the bottom side;

a central plane having an upper surface and an opposed lower surface, the central plane extending between: (i) the front wall and the rear wall, and (ii) the right side wall and the left side wall;

a first plurality of baffles extending: (i) substantially vertically upwards from the upper surface of the central plane to the top side of the frame, (ii) from the left side wall to the nozzle, and (iii) from the right side wall to the nozzle;

a second plurality of baffles extending: (i) substantially vertically downwards from the lower surface of the central plane to the bottom side of the frame, (ii) from the left side wall to the nozzle, and (iii) from the right side wall to the nozzle;

a fabric steam pocket having two substantially planar surfaces with an opening therebetween positioned on the edges of the first and second plurality of baffles and frame; and

the central plane of the frame has channels connecting the first plurality of baffles on the upper surface of the plane with the second plurality of baffles on the lower surface of the plane.

7. The steam nozzle attachment of claim **6**, wherein the frame is rotatable about the steam inlet so that both surfaces of the steam pocket can be used for steam cleaning.

8. The steam nozzle attachment of claim **6**, wherein the passageway that extends to the inside of the front wall is substantially perpendicular to the first and second plurality of baffles.

9. The steam nozzle attachment of claim **6**, wherein the passageway has vents to direct steam into the region between the first and second plurality of baffles.

10. A steam pocket assembly for use with a steam cleaner, comprising:

a frame with a top side and a bottom side, comprising:

a front wall extending from the top side to the bottom side;

a rear wall extending from the top side to the bottom side, the rear wall with a steam inlet positioned on one side of the rear wall and a steam nozzle mounted to the opposed side of the rear wall, the nozzle having a passageway that extends from the nozzle to a position substantially adjacent to the inside of the front wall;

a right side wall extending from the top side to the bottom side;

a left side wall extending from the top side to the bottom side;

a plurality of baffles extending: (i) from the top side to the bottom side, the baffles extending substantially vertically relative to and between the top and bottom

sides, (ii) from the left side wall to the nozzle, and (iii) from the right side wall to the nozzle;

a fabric steam pocket configured and dimensioned to be secured to the frame, the fabric steam pocket including: (i) a first substantially planar layer of fabric and a corresponding second layer of fabric with the first and second layer joined about a portion of the perimeter to provide an open side to allow for securing on the rear wall of the frame, and (ii) at least two fasteners secured to the first layer along the open side fasteners to be secured to the second layer of fabric for securing the fabric steam pocket to the frame.

11. The steam pocket assembly of claim **10**, wherein the steam nozzle is configured and dimensioned to distribute steam into the region between the baffles and onto the fabric steam pocket secured on the frame.

12. The steam pocket assembly of claim **10**, wherein the frame is rotatable about the steam inlet so that the top side and the bottom side of the frame can be used for steam cleaning.

13. The steam pocket assembly of claim **10**, wherein the passageway that extends to the inside of the front wall is substantially perpendicular to the baffles.

14. The steam pocket assembly of claim **10**, wherein the passageway has vents to direct steam into the region between the baffles.

15. The steam pocket assembly of claim **10**, wherein each baffle of the plurality of baffles is non-perforated.

16. The steam pocket assembly of claim **10**, wherein as the fasteners are straps fixedly attached to one fabric layer and adjusted to be wrapped around the rear wall of the frame to be releasably secured to the other fabric layer.

17. A steam pocket assembly for use with a steam cleaner, comprising:

a frame with a top side and a bottom side, comprising:

a front wall extending from the top side to the bottom side;

a rear wall extending from the top side to the bottom side, the rear wall with a steam inlet positioned on one side of the rear wall and a steam nozzle mounted to the opposed side of the rear wall, the nozzle having a passageway that extends from the nozzle to a position substantially adjacent to the inside of the front wall;

a right side wall extending from the top side to the bottom side;

a left side wall extending from the top side to the bottom side;

a plurality of baffles extending: (i) from the top side to the bottom side, the baffles extending substantially vertically relative to and between the top and bottom sides and (ii) crossing the passageway substantially at right angles;

a fabric steam pocket configured and dimensioned to be secured to the frame, the fabric steam pocket including: (i) a first substantially planar layer of fabric and a corresponding second layer of fabric with the first and second layer joined about a portion of the perimeter to provide an open side to allow for securing on the rear wall of the frame, and (ii) at least two fasteners secured to the first layer along the open side fasteners to be secured to the second layer of fabric for securing the fabric steam pocket to the frame.

18. The steam pocket assembly of claim **17**, wherein the steam nozzle is configured and dimensioned to distribute steam into the region between the baffles and onto the fabric steam pocket secured on the frame.

19. The steam pocket assembly of claim **17**, wherein the frame is rotatable about the steam inlet so that the top side and the bottom side of the frame can be used for steam cleaning.

20. The steam pocket assembly of claim **17**, wherein the passageway has vents to direct steam into the region between the baffles.

21. The steam pocket assembly of claim **17**, wherein as the fasteners are straps fixedly attached to one fabric layer and adjusted to be wrapped around the rear wall of the frame to be releasably secured to the other fabric layer.

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